

MARINE HOSPITAL—CHARLESTON, S. C.

JANUARY 16, 1828.

Mr. CAMBRELING, from the Committee on Commerce, to which the subject had been referred, made the following

REPORT :

The Committee on Commerce, to which was referred the memorial of the City Council of Charleston, S. C., report :

On the 29th June, 1802, Mr. Gallatin, then Secretary of the Treasury, proposed to the City Council of Charleston, S. C. through the Collector, to take charge of the sick and disabled seamen at that port, for which they were to receive the hospital dues collected there, and 15,000 dollars out of the general Hospital Fund, for constructing a Marine Hospital. This proposal was renewed through the Collector on the 24th March, 1803. On the 2d November, 1804, the City Council accept the proposal, consenting "to defray every expense attending the Marine Hospital," and relying on their Legislature to pass, and on Congress to give their consent to, an act authorizing them to levy a duty on tonnage of vessels, to supply any deficiency which might "accrue in building and supporting the Marine Hospital." The Collector announced this decision of the City Council to the Secretary of the Treasury on the 21st November, 1804, and asked to be furnished with the \$15,000, or to be informed whether he might pay it "out of moneys arising from the revenue." The contract was fulfilled on the part of the City Council, who took charge of, and commenced their expenditures for sick and disabled seamen, on the 19th April, 1805. On the 28th April, 1806, Congress gave its assent to an act of the Legislature of South Carolina, imposing a tonnage duty of six cents on vessels entering Charleston from any foreign port, which was afterwards increased to ten cents. The Secretary of the Treasury, on the 10th August, 1806, authorized the purchase of a site for a Marine Hospital for 5,500 dollars, in pursuance of this contract. The Collector paid the amount; the purchase was made, and the lot was afterwards conveyed to the United States. The City Council pray that the contract may be fulfilled, and that they may be indemnified for the damages they have sustained in consequence of not paying them the 15,000 dollars in 1805. They have furnished with their memorial an account of receipts and expenditures for the support of sick and disabled seamen from the 19th April, 1805, to the 31st August, 1827, by which it appears that their expenditures have exceeded the sums received for hospital and tonnage dues \$ 55,972 44 cents.

The Committee are of opinion that the \$ 15,000 ought to have been provided as early as the 1st of January, 1806, the City Council having, on their part, commenced the execution of the contract on the 19th April preceding. Had that payment been made, the Hospital would have been built, and, probably, a large portion of the sum expended by the City Council, would have been saved. The Government is not bound to indemnify the Council for this large expenditure; they assumed the payment of any sum which might be required, and a tonnage duty was authorized to meet any deficiency. The \$15,000 was however, due the City Council as early as the 1st January, 1806. Assuming it to have been due about that time, and estimating the interest on the same in lieu of damages, and deducting therefrom the \$ 5,500 paid in 1826, with interest, there would remain due on this contract more than \$ 25,000. Considering that some allowance should be made for our non-compliance with the contract; that the Hospital cannot be built for the sum originally contemplated; and that the public interest would be consulted by our complying with the agreement entered into in 1804, the Committee, (referring for further information to the documents annexed,) recommend an appropriation of \$ 25,000 for building a Marine Hospital at Charleston, S. C., and in lieu of all claims of the City Council under the contract in question.

DOCUMENTS

In relation to the Marine Hospital at Charleston, South Carolina.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, June 29, 1802.

SIR: Your letter, of the 9th instant, was duly received, and the plan contained in the enclosed copy of a letter to the Intendant, on the subject of a Marine Hospital, has received the President's approbation. If that proposition has not been misunderstood, it amounts to this: that all the hospital moneys collected in Charleston, after the 30th instant, either from American or foreign seamen, shall be paid over to the Corporation of that city; who will, after the same day, defray every expense attending the Marine Hospital, whether the same shall exceed or fall below the sums collected in the manner aforesaid. On that condition, the President consents to apply, out of the general fund, a sum not exceeding fifteen thousand dollars, nor what will be expended in Massachusetts for the same object, to the erection of a Marine Hospital in the vicinity of Charleston, and in such spot as shall have been procured by the Corporation for that purpose.

You will, in a few days, receive a circular, as agent, written on a supposition that you may continue to act as such. Its contents will become inapplicable, if the abovementioned plan shall have been carried into effect.

I am, &c.

JAMES SIMONS, Esq.

Collector, Charleston, S. C.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

March 24, 1803.

SIR: Your letter of the 8th instant, is received this day. You are authorized to act in relation to the Marine Hospital, in conformity to the instructions and powers given in my letter of the 29th June, 1802.

I am, &c.

JAMES SIMONS, Esq.

Collector of Charleston.

Report of the Committee accepting the offer of Mr. Gallatin, 2d November, 1804.

“ Council took into consideration the report of the Committee appointed by Council, to take into consideration the expediency of accepting of fifteen thousand dollars from the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, to be appropriated to the building of a Marine Hospital, which was agreed to, viz :

“ That they are unanimously of opinion, it will contribute to the interest of the city to accept the same, and that Council do rely on the Legislature of this State to pass an act or ordinance, and on Congress to give their consent to the same, for authorizing the City Council to raise and levy a duty on tonnage of ships and vessels, to supply any deficiency which may accrue, in building and supporting the said Marine Hospital.”

CUSTOM HOUSE, CHARLESTON,

November 21, 1804.

SIR: I am very happy to be able to inform you that a steady adherence to law and your instructions has (without any late application from me) induced the City Council to come to the following determination, which has been communicated to me, officially, by the Intendant: “To accept the proffered sum of fifteen thousand dollars, and the hospital money, for erecting and supporting a Marine Hospital; and to rely on the Legislature of this State to pass an act or ordinance, and on Congress to give their consent to the same, for authorizing the City Council to raise and levy a duty on the tonnage of ships and vessels, to supply any deficiencies that may arise in building and supporting said Hospital.” I will, therefore, be obliged to you, to furnish me with the amount, or to inform me whether I may pay it out of moneys arising from the revenue. I propose to give up the Hospital at the close of the present quarter, and close the accounts up to the 31st December, as usual. From and after that period, I shall grant per-

mits of admission into the Hospital, as at present ; leave to the Council to permit others to enter the Hospital, as they may choose to arrange ; and pay all moneys received from that fund, regularly, quarterly, to the Intendant or Treasurer of the Council, as shall be determined.

Infinita, perplexing, and embarrassing, were my duties, as Agent of that institution, before I removed the Hospital to Fort Pinckney ; many were the instances of men who had no right to enter the Hospital, being put in drays, and carried, in the agonies of death, and thrown down at the Hospital door. The Council, on establishing the Hospital at Charleston, will counteract such acts of inhumanity, by a special ordinance. Removing the Hospital to Fort Pinckney, without the most remote misunderstanding between myself and the Council, has had the effect of filling the city Poor House with persons who were formerly forced on me. I calculate on this to produce the desired effect.

I take the liberty to refer you to your letters to me, dated June 29, 1802, and 24th March, 1803, should you deem it proper to give me any additional instructions previous to the surrender of the Hospital.

I do assure you, sir, I am truly glad that the Marine Hospital is in future to be under the control of the City Council ; because they possess a power (I do not) to prevent impositions being hereafter practised upon that institution, as well as much trouble it occasioned to me, at all times, not only to permit persons not entitled to enter the Hospital, but to procure coffins for the dead, which I would not consent to. Indeed, when Mr. D—— was lately Intendant, he declared to me that his feelings were so distressed by repeated applications, that no consideration would induce him to serve again, while the Hospital remained at Fort Pinckney ; and I will be candid to acknowledge, I never had any hesitation in sending all applicants, not entitled to enter the Hospital, *to the Intendant*.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

JAMES SIMONS, *Collector*.

Hon. ALBERT GALLATIN.

P. S. See also your letter to me, of the 14th June, 1802.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, 10th August, 1816.

SIR : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, and a resolution of the City Council of Charleston, recommending the purchase of Mrs. Drayton's lot of ground, at the price of \$5,500, as a site for a Marine Hospital. The Collector of the Port of Charleston will, accordingly, be directed to make the payment of the price, as soon as the conveyance shall be completed.

As it is desirable that suitable buildings may be erected, with as little delay as possible, under the superintendence of the City Council, I pray you to favor me with a plan, and an estimate of the expense

of executing it, that the subject may be submitted to the President for his sanction. Economy will, of course, be observed, as far as is consistent with the objects of the establishment.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, Sir,

Your most ob't servant,

A. J. DALLAS.

ELIAS HORRY, Esq.

Intendant, Charleston, S. C.

Extract of the Secretary of the Treasury's letter to the Collector, respecting Mrs. Drayton's lot, in Hampstead, as a site for a Marine Hospital, dated 10th August, 1816.

"In pursuance of the contract made upon that subject, in 1804, between the Treasury Department and the City Council, you will be pleased to take immediate measures, in concert with the Intendant, to complete the purchase of Mrs. Drayton's lot, in Hampstead, for \$5,500. You will request the District Attorney to examine the title, and to prepare a conveyance in due form of law; upon the delivery and recording of which, you will pay to the grantor the consideration of \$5,500, and charge the same in your accounts, as heretofore authorized."

